

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 05421 011013Z POSS DUPE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 05421

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (FUKUDA, TAKEO)
SUBJECT: FUKUDA VISIT PAPER: JAPAN-SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: TOKYO 4578

1. THE JAPANESE REGARD THE SOVIET UNION AS THE PRIMARY POTENTIAL THREAT TO THEIR SECURITY, AND THUS ARE DEEPLY INTERESTED IN SOVIET GLOBAL STRATEGY. THEY TEND NATURALLY, HOWEVER, TO VIEW THAT STRATEGY FROM THEIR EASTERN PERSPECTIVE, AND ARE PARTICULARLY AND IMMEDIATELY CONCERNED BY THE SOVIET ROLE IN NORTHEAST ASIA. AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THIS EVER-PRESENT CONCERN, THE AIM OF JAPANESE POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION IS TO MAINTAIN A CORRECT, STABLE BILATERAL ATMOSPHERE, IN WHICH POSSIBILITIES OF POLITICAL CONFRONTATION ARE MINIMIZED WHILE A GRADUAL GROWTH IN TRADE AND ECONOMIC TIES IS PERMITTED. THE JAPANESE TAKE THE FORMAL POSITION THAT THEIR APPROACH TOWARD MOSCOW IS INDEPENDENT OF AND UNRELATED TO ANYTHING THEY MAY BE DOING VIS-A-VIS PEKING. HOWEVER, MOSCOW, LIKE PEKING, REFUSES TO ACCEPT THAT CONTENTION, AND ITS POLICY TOWARD JAPAN CONTINUES TO BE HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY, AND IN TURN SEEKS TO AFFECT, JAPAN-CHINA TIES.

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 05421 011013Z POSS DUPE

2. A MAJOR SOVIET CONCERN FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS HAS BEEN THE PROSPECT OF A JAPAN-CHINA PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY, WITH ITS ANTI-HEGEMONY CLAUSE--WHICH CHINA SEES AS A REFERENCE TO THE USSR, WHICH THE SOVIETS TOO INTERPRET AS SUCH, BUT TO WHICH JAPAN WISHES TO GIVE A BROADER MEANING LESS OFFENSIVE TO MOSCOW. THE SOVIETS

HAVE OVER THE YEARS ATTEMPTED TO COUNTER PROGRESS IN JAPAN-CHINA PFT NEGOTIATIONS THROUGH A MIXTURE OF BLUSTER AND SMOOTH TALK, A COMBINATION OF TACTICS VERY EVIDENT RECENTLY. ON THE ONE HAND THE SOVIETS HAVE UNLEASHED A CONCERTED ANTI-JAPANESE PROPAGANDA BARRAGE, E.G., WARNING OF RENEWED TENDENCIES TOWARD MILITARIZATION IN JAPAN, AND HAVE THREATENED VAGUE BUT UNPLEASANT CONSEQUENCES FOR JAPANESE INTERESTS IF THE PFT IS SIGNED. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SOVIETS HAVE RECENTLY PLACED GREAT EMPHASIS ON THE IDEA OF CONCLUDING A GOOD NEIGHBOR TREATY WITH JAPAN (WHICH WOULD NOT ADDRESS THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES QUESTION). IN ADDITION, THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO HAVE UNDERTAKEN A CAMPAIGN TO CURRY FAVOR ACROSS THE JAPANESE POLITICAL SPECTRUM, THEIR TARGETS SEEMING TO BE ANYONE, WHETHER OF CONSERVATIVE OR LEFTIST PERSUASION, WHO HAS AN ANTI-CHINESE AXE TO GRIND.

3. THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT A PFT BETWEEN JAPAN AND CHINA IS INEVITABLE AND THAT THEY HAD BEST PROCEED TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A POST-PFT SITUATION IN WHICH THEY WOULD ARGUE THAT A GOOD NEIGHBOR TREATY IS A LOGICAL NECESSITY FOR JAPAN IN ORDER TO RESTORE BALANCE IN ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS TWO MAJOR COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS. THE JAPANESE ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO RESIST THIS APPROACH, SINCE SUCH A TREATY WOULD SHUNT ASIDE WHAT FOR JAPAN REMAINS THE CENTRAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TOKYO 05421 011013Z POSS DUPE

POLITICAL ISSUE, THE STATUS OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES. THE SOVIETS APPEAR CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME THE ADVANTAGES OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TIES WILL OUTWEIGH THOSE CONSIDERATIONS OF NATIONAL PRIDE REPRESENTED BY THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES ISSUE, AND THAT THE LATTER WILL GRADUALLY FADE FROM PUBLIC ATTENTION.

4. IN THE MEANTIME, DESPITE THEIR DIFFERENCES BOTH SIDES ARE ABLE TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC ISSUES IN A RELATIVELY STRAIGHTFORWARD FASHION. TRADE AND INVESTMENT ARE EXPANDING GRADUALLY, AND SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ARE MOVING AHEAD MORE OR LESS ON SCHEDULE. FOR THE JAPANESE, A MAJOR ISSUE HERE IS THE DEGREE OF U.S. PARTICIPATION WHICH MAY BE FORTHCOMING, AND WHICH THE JAPANESE SIDE REGARDS AS ESSENTIAL BEFORE PROCEEDING FROM EXPLORATORY TO PRODUCTION PHASES. (THE STATUS OF JAPAN-SOVIET COOPERATION IN SIBERIA, AND OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT, WILL BE INTENSIVELY REVIEWED IN A MEETING OF U.S. AND JAPANESE EXPERTS ON SOVIET AFFAIRS IN WASHINGTON IN JUNE.) JAPAN-SOVIET FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS, TO REGULATE SALMON FISHING BEYOND 200 MILES,

APPEAR TO BE APPROACHING A SATISFACTORY (ALTHOUGH PROBABLY ONLY TEMPORARY) CONCLUSION. THE JAPANESE EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO RESPOND SHARPLY TO SIGNATURE OF A PFT, BUT BELIEVE THAT ONCE AN INITIAL HARSH REACTION IS PAST, THE SOVIETS WILL RESUME A CORRECT POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP AND PROCEED WITH BUSINESS AS USUAL, ON GROUNDS THAT IT IS AS MUCH IN THEIR INTEREST AS IN JAPAN'S TO DO SO.

5. PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA WILL WISH TO DISCUSS THESE RECENT DYNAMICS IN JAPAN-SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT, AND WILL, AS ALWAYS, BE MOST INTERESTED IN OUR IMPRESSIONS OF SOVIET CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS IN THE EAST ASIAN REGION, AND IN OUR VIEWS OF THE MAJOR ISSUES IN US-SOVIET RELATIONS, INCLUDING SALT. MANSFIELD

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PAGE 04 TOKYO 05421 011013Z POSS DUPE

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